

What Happens When You Quit



Immediate Rewards:

- Within **20 minutes** of your last cigarette, blood pressure, pulse rate and body temperature return to normal.
- Within **12 hours** after your last cigarette, carbon monoxide and nicotine levels decline rapidly and your heart and lungs will begin damage repair.
- Within **24 hours**, your chance of heart attack decreases.
- Within **48 hours**, nerve endings start re-growing, and your ability to smell and taste things is enhanced.
- Within **72 hours**, your bronchial tubes relax, lung capacity increases, and breathing becomes easier.



Symptoms of Recovery:

- Healing is a process that begins immediately, but continues over time and therefore gets better over time.
- During healing, instead of feeling better right away, you may feel worse for a short time.
- “Withdrawal pangs” are really symptoms of the recovery process and can include:
 - Dry, sore gums or tongue
 - Edginess, hunger, fatigue, more short-tempered
 - Temporary weight gain
 - Trouble sleeping
 - Increased coughing
- These above symptoms are a result of nicotine clearing from your system; the nicotine is gone from the body in 2-3 days.



Long Term Benefits:

- Within **one to nine months**, cilia re-grow in the lungs, which increase their ability to handle mucous, clean the lungs and reduce infection.
- Within **five years**, the lung cancer death rate for the average smoker (one pack a day) decreases from 137 per 100,000 people to 72 per 100,000 people.
- Within **ten years**, the lung cancer death rate for the average smoker drops to almost the rate of non-smokers (12 deaths per 100,000 people). The risk for other cancers (mouth, larynx, esophagus, bladder, kidney, pancreas) also decrease.

When you quit you add a number of healthy, productive days to each year of your life. For a free quit kit, or for more information on quitting and our quit groups, contact Tobacco Free Lake County at 847-377-8090 or TFLC@lakecountyil.gov. Visit us on the web at www.lakecountyil.gov/health/tobaccofree.



Lake County
Health Department and
Community Health Center

